

Connections

November 2005

Busy Construction Season Starts to Wind Down

by Bob Brendel

There’s still some work in progress, but for the most part another MoDOT construction season is wrapping up – a season that thanks to last year’s passage of Amendment 3 was the busiest in MoDOT history.

In addition to all of the work completed this year, some of the most significant aspects of the 2005 construction program occurred off the roadway.

Following the November 2004 election, MoDOT quickly developed a three-pronged plan to improve Missouri’s most heavily traveled roadways, to accelerate some projects already in the Statewide

But to get all of that work done – SRI projects added to those already scheduled in the STIP – drivers were going to face work zones (roughly 1,000) like never before. Consequently, more emphasis needed to be placed on work zone management and a statewide work zone awareness communication plan that included communicating estimated delays via changeable message boards.



This past construction season was the busiest in MoDOT history. Here workers replace the southbound bridge over Hominy Creek on Route 63 in Boone County.

Transportation Improvement Program, and to add other major projects to the construction program. In short order, projects were identified, designed, bid and awarded.

“The speed at which we identified needs, designed and rolled out these Amendment 3 projects was truly remarkable,” Director of Program Delivery Dave Nichols said. He noted that one Smooth Roads Initiative project was actually completed before MoDOT received its first penny of Amendment 3 revenue.

An interactive work zone map – updated daily – that allows motorists to organize their work zone search by trip origin and destination, route or region was added to the MoDOT Web site. Color-coded icons display active sites by degree of delay. Icons can be clicked on if motorists want more detailed information on specific work zones. Text displays describe the duration of the work zone, the type of work and expected lane closures.

Early in the summer, when a project on Interstate 44 near Cuba caused lengthy delays (especially for people from the St. Louis area destined for the Lake of



the Ozarks or Branson), a corridor team involving Districts 6, 7, 8 and 9 was established to coordinate incident response and work zone management.

“It was the first time that we had looked outside our districts at the effects of work zones,” said St. Louis District Engineer Ed Hassinger. Since then a similar team has been formed for the Interstate 70 corridor. Both teams communicate daily.

“We’ve taken a quantum leap ahead of where we were,” Hassinger said, “but we can get better.”

Message boards are now pre-positioned on both cross-state interstates, and

MoDOT will eventually erect permanent boards on I-44 and I-70. Night work to minimize impacts was also increased; 146 projects that required lane closures were done at night in 2005 compared to 87 the year before.

“We have to realize that a work zone is an incident,” Director of System Management Don Hillis said. “The only difference is that it is an incident that we created.”

“We’re making a lot of progress,” said Nichols. “Our roads are getting smoother, and our customers have recognized that. But what happened this year is just the start. We’ll make an even bigger impact next year with SRI projects. A lot of what we did this year only laid the groundwork for what is to come. We’re just breaking ground on this massive \$7.3 billion program for the next five years.”

While this work poses some inconvenience for Missouri motorists, the end result will be well worth it – smoother, safer highways that save lives, create jobs and improve travel.

MAP: Life After Amendment 3

by Sue Cox

Plan ahead. Think about the future.

It’s something we all do. It requires a certain amount of our time and money. When will we buy a new car? What about the roof – does it need replacing? Should we save more for the kid’s education?



MoDOT is also asking some questions about its future and how we spend our time and money.

What’s after Amendment 3 and the Smooth Roads Initiative? What’s most important to Missourians and how much will they spend to have the transportation system they want?

Six regional groups of Missouri citizens are considering these questions. They’re involved in MoDOT’s long-range planning initiative, Missouri Advance Planning, or MAP, which will be completed next summer.

Each group consists of about 20 citizens – educators, entrepreneurs, farmers, community leaders, businessmen and others. This public outreach effort supports MoDOT’s efforts to achieve several tangible results outlined in the Tracker that focus on community relations, public participation and customer communication.

Donald Dodd, a Regional Working Group member, and publisher of The Salem News, said MoDOT wants “everyday folks like you and me” discussing Missouri’s

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Child safety technicians receive certification

transportation future. “The key is that the (state transportation) system is ours. We pay for it, and thanks to processes such as the MAP project now under way, we will have a say in what type of system we want, too.”

“It’s essential we have ongoing conversations with folks who use our highways and other transportation services,” Rahn said. “It’s my duty to listen to Missouri’s citizens. They must have their transportation concerns addressed.

“It’s my duty to listen to Missouri’s citizens. They must have their transportation concerns addressed.”

MAP’s objective is to create a guide for making future transportation investments, not to develop a list of projects.

To facilitate the members’ work, they’re reviewing the pre-planning research MoDOT gathered from 3,100 customer telephone surveys and 150 interviews.

When working group members link this public input with their own

choices for what transportation in Missouri should be like.

“Effective involvement of the public through the Regional Working Groups is key – the public outreach process is as important as the future planning,” said Eric Curtit, MoDOT’s long-range planner and MAP’s project manager. The long-range planning team in MoDOT’s Transportation Planning Division, which includes district and division representatives, is leading the project with additional assistance from HNTB, the project consultant.

“The MoDOT team is joining with regional planning commissions and metropolitan planning organizations to listen to what Missourians have to say about the state’s transportation future,” Curtit said. “This helps us craft Missouri’s transportation vision and provide building blocks for a shared action plan focusing on the future.”

By planning ahead and thinking about the future, MoDOT can better provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

Plus, they have lots of great ideas, and they deserve the chance to be part of determining the state’s future transportation direction.”

thoughts and ideas, and with the engineering analysis of Missouri’s extensive transportation data, MoDOT will get a variety of options and



Mark Pierson, a transportation planner with Wilbur Smith and Associates, notes ideas about the future of transportation as part of a Missouri Advance Planning discussion.

Cathy Morrison

GL-400 Training Complete

by Megan Mills

All training for the GL-400 or Ground Speed Systems (GSS) have been implemented, just in time to combat the winter’s snow and ice.

The GL-400 is a cost-effective system inside snowplow trucks that controls the salt application and makes the snowplow driver’s job easier and safer. When operated correctly, the GL-400 can save the department \$2 million a year on salt supplies.

With the old system, MoDOT operators controlled the amount of salt released on the roads. To effectively control ice and snow on pavements, only 200 to 400 pounds of salt per lane-mile is necessary. On average, MoDOT operators were spreading 1,200 pounds of salt per lane-mile, an excess of 800 to 1,000 pounds of salt.

“MoDOT will save on fuel and salt with the increased use of the GL-400,” said Robert Lannert, Central Office techni-

cal support engineer. “The system can also help the environment by reducing the chance of water contamination.”

Although the GL-400 was developed about 10 years ago, Interim Director Dave Snider identified the need for a more comprehensive training program. Human Resources, Employee Development helped develop the new training program, which included information on hydraulic systems, basic electrical systems and operating and maintaining the GL-400. As a part of the program, the districts constructed a training module to provide hands-on training.

So far, the training has produced positive results. Operators are now more comfortable with the system and understand the importance of cutting costs.

Orange Leaves Mean MoDOT Bridge Inspection Season

By Megan Mills

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With fall approaching, MoDOT bridge maintenance crews are stepping into high gear to begin their annual bridge inspections. Seven bridge inspectors tackle the task of examining roughly half of MoDOT’s more than 10,000 bridges each year. MoDOT district employees at each location and two special bridge teams help the inspectors so they can complete the inspections by March 1.

“The main duty of the bridge inspector is to ensure that bridges are safe for the traveling public,” said Kenneth Foster, MoDOT supervising bridge inspection engineer.

The bridges are examined for signs of deterioration, section loss, cracked or broken parts, rotten timber, signs of settlement and loose or missing parts. They then are assigned condition ratings. Each bridge is rated on three elements: the deck, the superstructure (connection between supports) and the substructure (the ground supports). Bridges that receive a rating of three or

four must be inspected each year. There are about 1,400 bridges included in this category.

Most bridges require some type of maintenance upon inspection. Common maintenance includes cleaning, sealing cracks, joints or decks, repairing concrete decks, replacing rotten timber, removing drift and slope or channel maintenance.

“Bridge inspections are performed in the fall and winter months because vegetation is down and the cooler weather allows us to dress protectively without getting too hot,” said Foster. “Inspecting in fall and winter also frees the summer months for our underwater inspection program.”

All seven bridge inspectors are SCUBA certified to perform wading and diving operations on parts of bridges submerged in water. This year MoDOT performed 47 wading inspections, 10 depth-sound inspections and 14 SCUBA inspections.



This is the time of year when MoDOT bridge maintenance crews are busy with annual bridge inspections.

Following the assessments, the bridge inspectors compile several lists, including an “exceptional bridge list,” that describes bridges in extremely poor condition. These lists are designed to provide the districts with information

about the condition of their bridges and ideas for future programming needs to ensure bridge safety for motorists.

For Your Benefit

Important Benefit Information

MoDOT/MSHP Medical Plan open enrollment for coverage effective Jan. 1, 2006

The Medical Plan Board of Trustees and the commission have approved an Open Enrollment period for coverage effective Jan. 1, 2006.

- This is an opportunity for current plan participants to switch between the offered options or to add eligible dependents who are not currently enrolled.
- It is also an opportunity for those who qualify to participate in the plan but do not currently participate.

They may enroll themselves and any eligible dependents.

- Employees should have received a brochure titled “2006 Benefit Update” at their home address outlining rates and any changes to the two options offered for 2006.
- Completed forms to make changes or to enroll must be received in the Employee Benefits office (Central Office location) no later than Nov. 15 to qualify.
- If employees do nothing, their current coverage will be in effect for 2006.

- Employees should contact their insurance representative or Employee Benefits if they have questions or want to make changes.

Cafeteria Plan Open Enrollment Period for 2006 Plan Year

- Enrollment: Oct. 1 – Dec. 1, 2005
- Final deadline to change or correct enrollment is Dec. 15 (either on-line or paper forms must be post marked by that date). Only those who enrolled by Dec. 1 have these two weeks to correct anything that is wrong!
- Enroll on-line or on paper: employees who receive a paycheck on Aug. 31 will receive one of the following enrollment notices:
 1. e-mail with online links sent to participants now set up on e-mail

with MOCafe (no paper enrollment form mailed to them).

2. paper enrollment forms mailed to their homes for all other eligible employees.
- Forms are one part with instructions on the back.
 - Employees return forms to the MOCafe office, not to Employee Benefits or payroll/personnel offices.
 - Questions should be directed to the Cafeteria Plan Administrator at 1-800-659-3035.

I-64 Approved As First Design-Build Project

by Linda Wilson

The first design-build highway project in Missouri has received the go-ahead.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the new Interstate 64 project as the first design-build project in the state. The contractor should be selected in September 2006, and construction could start soon after.

Design-build is a project delivery method that combines both the design and construction phases into one contract. This one-contract team completes the design and construction at the same time, instead of in succession, which saves time and resources. In 2002, the Missouri legislature approved the use of design-build on three MoDOT projects.

“The benefit of design-build is that the contractor team can maximize its efficiencies. We provide the contractor with the flexibility to be innovative in design and construction techniques, giving them the predetermined budget for the project and completion date,” said Dave Nichols, MoDOT director of Program Delivery. “The end result is the public benefits from the road improvements much quicker than our normal delivery process.”

MoDOT has established design-build goals for the project. The contractor team will be selected based on value and who can best meet or beat the following goals:

- Deliver the project within the program budget of \$535 million.
- Complete the project no later than Oct. 1, 2010.
- Maximize the mobility and capacity improvements in the corridor when construction is complete.
- Minimize and mitigate construction impacts to customers through construction staging and communication efforts.
- Provide a quality product that produces a long lasting transporta-



I-64 Project Director Lesley Hoffarth fields questions after the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the I-64 project as MoDOT's first design-build project.

- tion facility.
- Demonstrate a quality construction and communication effort that creates a new model for design-build projects.

The project is funded at \$535 million, of which \$35 million has already been spent on property acquisition, environmental items and engineering. In July, the Federal Highway Administration approved the Environmental Impact Statement. The combination of the federal approvals and full funding means the project is clear to move ahead.

“The reconstruction of I-64 is so critical to the heart of the region,” said St. Louis Area District Engineer Ed Hassinger. “The old design of the highway adds to the daily congestion and the crumbling condition of the bridges and pavement are in desperate need of replacement. Our goal now is to finalize the plans to build this project as quickly as possible and with great value to the public.”

During November, MoDOT will issue the Request for Qualifications and hold an industry informational meeting. A request for proposals should be issued in late December with the final RFP in the spring. The contractor team should be selected in September 2006.

MoDOT To Implement First-in-the-Nation Homeland Security Review

by DeAnne Bonnot

A new, first-in-the-nation partnership between the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and the national Department of Homeland Security will reduce security threats to Americans and the trucking industry.

Under the partnership, when MoDOT Motor Carrier Services investigators perform safety checks on trucking companies and their equipment, they will also assess the companies' security needs. When the program is fully implemented early next year, investigators will offer advice to help transportation firms correct possible security issues.

“This new component to our visits will help safeguard the motor carrier industry against a terrorist attack,” said Ben Goodin, motor carrier enforcement administrator. “We'll tell companies about potential problems we notice

and perform safety audits, including a review of drivers' records.”

Security assessment information collected under the new program will be sent to federal safety and security agencies. The Transportation Safety Administration will use it to monitor trends and develop plans to cope with potential security issues. Threat assessment information will also be provided to the Missouri Homeland Security Office and law enforcement agencies as needed.

“We're honored to be the pilot state for this program,” Goodin said. “It will be an additional safeguard for Missouri and the nation.”

Public/Private Partnerships Are Key To Transportation Success

by Shane Peck

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn said the “T-word” in St. Louis on Sept. 29. Kicking off a workshop to discuss partnerships between the public and private sectors, Rahn made it clear that a new Mississippi River Bridge in the gateway city will not happen without tolling.

“It is time we stop talking about fantasy and start talking about reality,” Rahn said.

Reality was a theme of the day-long conference. Real-world examples from Missouri and other states were presented to show how public and private entities have worked together to build major transportation projects. Many of these improvements have involved toll facilities.

MoDOT does not have the authority to collect tolls on roads or bridges. A private entity, however, can administer tolling on state highways. The Lake of the Ozarks Community Bridge is

being financed through a toll collected by a transportation corporation. Once the bridge is paid for, the toll will be removed and the bridge turned over to MoDOT.

Public/private partnerships in Missouri have typically involved cost-sharing agreements between MoDOT and groups of citizens interested in getting needed highway improvements completed sooner. The groups usually take the form of transportation corporations or districts. Such cost sharing agreements may be rare in coming years according to Rahn.

“Projects on Routes 36, 67 and 100 benefited from the additional funding we received through passage of Amendment 3. Their timing was right,” Rahn said. “Without additional funding, it will be difficult for us to enter into these kinds of agreements in the future.”

Rahn added that this situation is all the more reason to explore new and innovative ways for MoDOT to work with



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn, far right, gets ready to kick off the Partnerships in Transportation Workshop held recently in St. Louis.

private groups to fund and build vital highway improvements. He said the Sept. 29 workshop was an important step in the right direction.

The workshop was facilitated by the National Council for Public-Private

Partnerships. More information about the council and case studies from around the country are available at www.ncppp.org.

September Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Donald Barnes	D3	20
Norman Bast	D6	36
Michael Bruemmer	D2	33
Steve Cox	D5	41
Lawrence Dunning	D4	21
Dan Fraley	D9	28
Walter Graves	D9	36
David Helming	D5	31
Samuel Hoffman	D9	19
Rita Kerperin	CO	18
Kyle Kittrell	CO	29
Robert O'Day	D6	22
Robert Patterson	D9	7
Shirley Perkins	CO	14
Walter Rash	D8	32
Roger Rawlings	D8	18
Patricia Reinkemeyer	CO	12
Shirley Rodgers	D10	16
Gary Ruhling	D6	28
Joseph Whalen	D1	6

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In Memoriam

Active Employees

Maurice Webb	D6	Aug. 30
Tony L. Barnes	CO	Sept. 16

Retirees

Fred M. Tesreau	D10	Aug. 27
Harold E. Taylor	D9	Aug. 29
Jack J. Patterson	D1	Sept. 5
James “Jim” R. O’Grady	D6	Sept. 6
Marion J. Kunze	D2	Sept. 18
Donald W. Tharp	D2	Sept. 19
James C. Gibson	D6	Sept. 21
Hubert A. Henry	D2	Sept. 24
Don Burlbaw	D6	Sept. 27
Ron Roeder	D6	Sept. 29

November Service Anniversaries

40 Years		Gary M. Ragan	D7
Elmer A. Greunke	D5	Dennis S. Austin	D8
30 Years		Kevin W. Hageman	D8
Barry M. Bergman	D6	Chris E. Berry	D9
25 Years		Randall D. Lea	D9
Paula A. Meredith	CO	Steven D. Mayberry	D9
20 Years		Brian L. McMillian	D9
Edward A. Montgomery	D1	Connie P. Robinson	D10
Robert W. Stone	D1	Stanley S. Snider	D10
Drake D. Tarpley	D1	Matthey J. Cowell	CO
Robert N. Davidson	D3	5 Years	
Mark E. Giessinger	D3	Keven D. Johnson	D1
Rodney L. Osbourne	D3	John C. Shrewsbury	D1
Larry Jefferson	D4	Marisa L. Brown	D3
Raymond McKelvy	D4	Sara S. Combs	D4
Dianna L. Johnson	D5	Alan L. Cordell	D4
Donald E. Duclos	D6	Raymond W. Gorley	D4
Mary P. Ellebracht	D6	Terry R. Jackson	D4
Daryl L. Swindle	D6	Bradley W. Kelley	D4
Joseph H. Wilde	D6	Bill J. Marshall	D4
Ronald W. Blakely	D7	Teresa G. Martin	D4
Mike G. Metcalf	D8	Gerald L. Moling	D4
Curtis W. Richter	D9	Lois E. Embry	D5
Ronald G. Ballew	D10	John D. Hayden	D5
15 Years		Troy A. Minnick	D5
Joseph T. Cooper	D1	Jason T. Nilges	D5
Michael E. Herleth	D2	William F. Bernsen	D6
John A. Curtis	D3	Gail J. Cutts	D6
Beth A. Page	D3	Randy W. Dorner	D6
Sherita C. White	D4	Donald W. Harmon	D6
Kent Howard	D5	Deborah B. Hartsfield	D6
Jon P. Miller	D5	Jerry A. Lewis	D6
Richard W. Barnes	D7	James M. Taylor	D6
Deryle G. Potter	D8	Larry M. Thomas	D6
Paul J. Bollinger	D9	Stanley H. Williams	D6
Jesse L. Earls	D9	Kent C. Boyd	D7
Philip E. Morgan	CO	Randall K. Coffey	D7
Stephen D. Atkinson	CO	Doris A. Snyder	D7
Stephanie L. Green	CO	Jeffrey W. Allen	D9
Diane M. Haslag	CO	Jeffery A. Keeven	D9
Mary L. Kladiva	CO	Arthur P. Womble	D9
10 Years		Bridget D. Althoff	CO
Ellen Gehringer	D2	Darla K. Fisher	CO
Robert E. Lockard	D2	Carissa N. Hutson	CO
Matthew Golian	D3	Gari L. Luttrell	CO
Richard W. Sanders	D3	Charles R. Robinson	CO
Michael R. Kempker	D5	Tina R. Thurman	CO
Ronald H. Rothove	D5		

Veteran’s Day is Nov. 11

We salute the MoDOT employees who have served, are serving or will serve our country in time of need.



Central Office

Governmental Relations Gears Up For Another Legislative Session

by DeAnne Bonnot

“There are two things you don’t want to see being made – sausage and legislation,” said Otto von Bismark, Germany’s chancellor in the 19th century.

Thankfully, MoDOT has a team of experts to monitor the legislative process for us. Governmental Relations

employees are in the thick of the legislative process as they work to promote the goals of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission in both the state and federal Capitols.

Governmental Relations informs members of the General Assembly, our congressional delegation and other elected

officials about what MoDOT does and why we make the decisions we do. They also explain legislation that will make our roads safer and enable the department to do its job better.

“As a state agency, we need to be transparent,” said Jay Wunderlich, Governmental Relations director. “We’re accountable to the people’s representatives for the money we spend and the projects we adopt.”

The representatives of the people pass on the peoples’ concerns, too.

“Legislators and other officials ask us to help answer their constituents’ questions and to address their concerns. Some we can answer on the spot. Other times, we call on the whole MoDOT team to find a solution,” said Aaron Kincaid, senior administrative technician.

Those requests peak when the General Assembly is in session from January

to May. Governmental Relations specialists Pam Harlan and Lisa LeMaster, along with Wunderlich, find little time for breaks while they discuss issues, bill language and proposed impacts with legislators. Back in the office, Kincaid and Amy Niederhelm, senior administrative technician, track bills and collect and analyze the financial impact proposals could have on MoDOT’s bottom line.

When schedules get tight though, it’s all hands on deck at the Capitol to monitor discussions of proposals that concern the department. Sometimes hearings and debates last late into the evening. During the last weeks of session, Governmental Relations staff members seem to live under the dome.

But the work doesn’t end with the close of session. The governor may or may not sign bills of interest to MoDOT. If not, work begins to prepare for the veto session. And then it’s time to get ready for next year.

Kent Van Landuyt, who specializes in federal issues, was “temporarily” borrowed from Planning to work on the federal transportation bill reauthorization. From December of 2002 until this summer, he and MoDOT management worked with Missouri’s representatives and senators in Washington, D.C. to keep them informed of the state’s transportation needs. Though the reauthorization bill, SAFTEA-LU, became law on Aug. 3, there’s still a lot of work to be done to interpret the impact on federal programs and appropriations.

The legislative process might not be pretty, but members of Team Governmental Relations have learned that when they, elected officials and legislative staff work together, the end product can be a beautiful thing.



MoDOT’s Governmental Relations staff members are getting ready for another legislative session. From left to right are Aaron Kincaid, Jay Wunderlich, Amy Niederhelm, Kent Van Landuyt and Pam Harlan. Not pictured is Lisa LeMaster.

MoDOT Recycles

The State Recycling Program is planning to participate in MO Recycles Day, a part of America Recycles Day, on Nov. 15. The focus will be on collecting rechargeable batteries and ink jet cartridges. Any state office, facility, or university is eligible to participate.

MoDOT actively recycles rechargeable batteries and ink jet cartridges. Each district Information Systems office has postage-paid envelopes that can be used at no cost to the department to mail used ink jet cartridges. In addition, the signal shops in each district

have boxes to handle rechargeable batteries.

If you don’t know where to take used ink jet cartridges or rechargeable batteries, you can send them to Kevin Wideman, environmental compliance coordinator, at Central Office. For more information, contact Wideman at (573) 526-4171 or Kevin.Wideman@modot.mo.gov.



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Jeff Padgett, MoDOT’s Employee Benefits manager, attempts to sink a putt in the 10-33 Benevolent Fund Golf Tournament held recently at the Columbia Country Club. More than 40 teams of MoDOT employees and retirees and their families and friends participated in the Sept. 12 event, which raised money for families of public service personnel, including highway workers, who have died in the line of duty.

D1

Northwest

Roadside History Secrets

by Holly Murphy

Roadside parks along Missouri's state routes are becoming a rare breed. In the years past, it was not uncommon for families to stop and stretch and enjoy these roadside parks which are usually tranquil spots filled with trees and room to stretch. Today, we quickly pass these areas by for the more modern rest areas or convenience stores. What may be lost with the decline of these parks is the piece of history many of these parks preserve. Most of these parks are named and have a historical point of interest, such as one roadside park in



Holly L. Murphy

Not only was Ann Hawkins-Gentry the first woman postmaster in Missouri, but her husband, Richard Gentry (leader of the Missouri Volunteers), was the center of a great controversy. Accused of cowardice and insubordination because he refused his commander's order to attack, he was later declared a brave American hero when his suspicion that the Seminole warriors had orchestrated a trap proved tragically true. Because he obeyed his commanding officer (future president Zachary Taylor), he died leaving a widow and nine children.

Gentry County along Route 169. The Ann Hawkins-Gentry Roadside Park is a peaceful, shady spot with large old trees. However, today most people use it more as a commuter parking lot. Tucked in the grasses is a monument which was dedicated in the late 1960s by the Missouri State Highways and Transportation Commission to the Gentry family in honor of their female ancestor, Ann Hawkins-Gentry. She was the wife of the man after whom Gentry County was named. Richard Gentry was a distinguished soldier and saw many battles during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. He lost his life in a battle while leading a regiment of Missouri volunteers in battle against the Seminole Indians in the Everglades of Florida, Christmas Day 1837.

Mr. Gentry died in a heroic battle and left behind a widow with nine children to raise. Prior to his death, Mr. Gentry had run Columbia's post office. After his demise Sen. Thomas Hart Benton, a family friend, helped Ann obtain that position to become Missouri's first woman postmaster. She remained in that position for 30 years. She also continued to run Columbia's first tavern. Upon hearing of her husband's death in 1837, she declared, "I'd rather be a brave man's widow than a coward's wife." Throughout her life in Boone



Holly L. Murphy

Located just south of the town of Stanberry on Route 169 (near the intersection with Route M), the Ann Hawkins-Gentry roadside park commemorates a lost piece of history.

County she personified the courage so common among pioneer women of the time. Today in the City of Columbia, a school and municipal building are named in her honor. What might surprise people of Gentry County is the Gentrys never lived anywhere near Gentry County. The early history books show the legislature

chose the name Gentry in 1845 when the county split from the larger Clinton County. So, as these roadside parks go by the wayside, some of our state history may go along with them. Take time to stop and read the markers that remain, you may be surprised at what you will discover.

We Have A Winner

by Holly Murphy

6 Hundreds of children stopped by the Highway Gardens at the Missouri State Fair held in Sedalia in August. Children who participated in the scavenger hunt were allowed to put their name in a drawing for a new BMX bicycle. From all the names collected, one eight-year old girl from a very small Northwest Missouri town proved to be this year's lucky winner! Kaysie Wiederholt, a third-grader at northeast Nodaway School in Ravenwood, was presented with the new bicycle and helmet by Rand Swanigan, roadside management specialist, who drove all the way from

Jefferson City to personally deliver the new bike. Kaysie was pretty excited about her new bike as were her two older brothers. We did get her to pause long enough for a few photos before she hopped on and started riding. Kaysie and her family visited the fair together one day in August and battled through the muddy conditions to see all the fair sites. Kaysie's parents report she is obviously a lucky little girl—this is the second bike she has won! The Northwest District is delighted that this year's winner was chosen from one of our home towns.



Holly L. Murphy

Third grader Kaysie Wiederholt was this year's State Fair drawing winner of the new BMX bicycle and helmet. She was very pleased when she got off the school bus to see Rand Swanigan, roadside management specialist from Central Office, who personally delivered her prize.

for more info

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D2

North Central

New DE Dan Niec Meets District 2

Dan Niec assumed his duties as the new District Engineer on September 1. One of his top priorities was to meet with employees. Over a two-week period he spent five days traveling to 15 locations to do just that. The visits gave



D2 an opportunity to get to know their new DE, and Niec a chance to familiarize himself with the district and get to know them.

Niec shared his direction for the district, and asked employees to voice their thoughts and concerns. "I was very impressed with the district two employees," said Niec. "They were more than willing to discuss the challenges that face the district and the department."

"One of the department's greatest assets is its dedicated employees, and district two seems to have more than its fair share. I would like to have spent more time with them, even though it seemed every meeting ran longer than expected." Niec plans to continually meet with the district employees on a more informal basis. "We

opened the lines of communication and I want to make sure those lines remain open."

Along with employee visits, some other top priorities include:

- Meeting with state legislators and other local officials.
- Rolling out the new district business plan.
- Finalizing major performance measures for the district.
- Helping employees understand where they fit into the district plan and MoDOT's plan to achieve our tangible results.

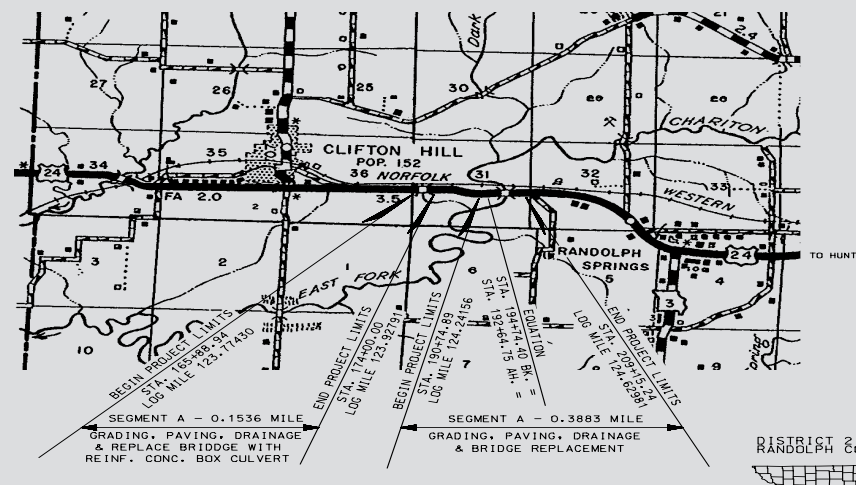
"Our employees are key to our success in the district and to the department," said Niec. That's why it's so important that every employee understand their role in the organization."

Niec joined MoDOT in 1991 as a construction inspector in the St. Louis area. Since then he has served as a resident engineer, area engineer and most recently as assistant district engineer in Hannibal before coming to Macon.

Niec is a registered professional engineer with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Niec is also a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, currently serving in a naval mobile construction battalion.

He and his wife, Laurie, have three daughters – Rachael, Emily, and Katie, ages 9, 5, and 1 year.

Practical Design for Route 24 Bridges



A public meeting to gain citizen input for an upcoming bridge project on Route 24 in Randolph County was recently held in Salisbury. The project is located on Route 24 midway between Moberly and Salisbury, and will replace the two existing bridges over the East Fork of the Chariton River.

Holding a public meeting to discuss upcoming projects with local citizens is nothing new, but an issue affecting this particular project is a relatively new concept called practical design, which is challenging designers to find new and better ways of delivering projects. In order to minimize the cost and time of construction, the new bridges will be built in the same location as the existing bridges. This will require Route 24 to be closed to traffic for up to three months during the construction period.

One component that makes this project a good candidate for practical design is the location. Although Route 24 is a busy roadway, Route 3 and Route 129 provide excellent detours for motorists to reach their destination during construction.

Design maps of the proposed project and detour routes were available at the meeting. Information boards were

on display showing an estimated 1.7 million dollar savings by building the bridges in their same locations and closing the road rather than constructing a temporary bypass.

Project Manager Brian Haeffner, along with other MoDOT employees, explained the practical design concept to interested citizens. "It's all about getting the most out of every single dollar we spend to design and build projects," said Haeffner. "It's our job to make sure we spend taxpayer dollars wisely. The savings can be used to meet other needs within our district."

Haeffner and his team solicited citizen comments through the public meeting, web site information and a mailing to area residents. The mailing was a first for D2's public outreach campaign. Postcards explaining the project with an invitation to the meeting were sent to residents in Chariton and Randolph Counties. The mailing helped obtain input from citizens who could not attend the meeting.

The project is scheduled for construction during the summer of 2008.

Congratulations on 32 Years of Service

With 32 years of service to MoDOT, D2's District Engineer Mike Bruemmer was honored by fellow employees during his retirement celebration on August 26. Invited guests from Director Pete Rahn to D2's Project Development Manager Paula Gough, shared personal and professional experiences they had with Mike, which captured his long-standing dedication and service to the citizens of Missouri.

Mike was quoted as saying, "It has been an honor to work with such dedicated public servants for more than three decades. They deserve the credit for what has been accomplished. The people of north central Missouri will continue to be in good hands." During his tenure with MoDOT Bruemmer held many leadership roles. He was the assistant district engineer for design in Kansas City, assistant state construction engineer at the central office in Jefferson City, and the district construction engineer for the district office in Jefferson City.

Congratulations Mike. We will see you on the golf course.



Director Pete Rahn presents Bruemmer with a plaque honoring his 32 years of service.



Paula Gough presents Bruemmer with a gift from D2. A photo of the district office signed by employees.

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D3

Northeast

From One Bridge to Another

Everyone in the Northeast District knew that working on Route 61 in Lincoln County would be challenging. A product of “urban sprawl,” Lincoln County is the fastest growing county in the state, and the traffic is keeping pace with the growth. The paving project became even more challenging when it was discovered that the northbound bridge at the Lincoln and St. Charles County line was in worse condition than originally thought.

To do the job right, a well-thought-out, but quick, decision was made to redeck the bridge completely instead of just repairing it. After notifying the public that construction would take longer than originally anticipated, MoDOT and its contractor sought out a unique solution to redecking the bridge without having to close both northbound lanes of traffic. The solution was to pour the bridge deck from the other side of the road.



Pumping concrete from the southbound bridge to place the northbound deck was a first for the Northeast District.

“It’s not every day you pour half of a bridge deck and pump concrete from the opposing structure,” remarked Resident Engineer Mark Croarkin. “Coordination among contractors was challenging, but everyone is working together to accomplish the project as quickly as possible,” Mark said. The entire project included paving several sections of Route 61 in both counties, and redecking the bridge. Even though motorists have to slow down to get through the work zone, MoDOT staff said most have been very patient.



Simon Begley, Kirk Youngblood, Josh Wealder, Cody Browning and Joe Collins (background) are part of the MoDOT team working to improve an outer road north of Hannibal. Using special crews and maintenance crews in the area, an intersection and outer road have been improved to accommodate traffic better.

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Cory David, a member of the Hannibal maintenance team, helps a little one down during Hannibal’s Big Truck Night. Cory and Matt Golian helped kids check out the truck and gave willing participants a bag of goodies to help remind them to be safe on the road. More than 400 kids of all ages came to the event.

Inspector Kelly to the Rescue

This summer, Lee Ann Kelly has been busy inspecting the Smooth Roads Initiative jobs on Route 61 in Lincoln and St. Charles counties. But she’s also been busy saving lives.

At around 2 a.m. on Aug. 11, the crew had just finished paving the northbound driving lane south of the county line and were taking down the lane drop. “Kurt Wengert [MoDOT], a contractor employee and I were profiling when we heard the wreck just north of us,” Lee Ann said. A man on a motorcycle was thrown, landing on the center line, with the cycle in the middle of the passing lane. As a licensed emergency medical technician who serves as a First Responder for the Pike County Ambulance District and the Frankford Fire Department, Lee Ann knew just what to do. “We called 911, then Kurt moved the motorcycle and the contractor employee began controlling traffic,” she recalled. “I had a bystander hold his head while I kept the patient from moving any part of his body until the ambulance and law enforcement arrived,” she said.

Just a few weeks later, another accident occurred at Route 61 and U south of Troy. “We were paving the



It is normally rare for Lee Ann Kelly to serve as an emergency first responder while working for MoDOT as a construction inspector. But not this year. Lee Ann has been the first on the scene of two serious accidents this summer.

southbound lane just north of Route U when we heard the crash,” she said. A contractor employee called 911, then began traffic control. Lee Ann ran to the wrecked car. “The driver was unconscious sitting upright in the driver’s seat, so I placed his head in the correct position, opened his airway, and made sure he was breathing until the ambulance arrived,” she said. Local law enforcement officials have credited Lee Ann for saving both these drivers’ lives.

www.modot.org/northeast

D4

Kansas City Area

Kansas City Scout Marks First Year Anniversary

by Joel Blobaum

Just one year after its public launch, the Kansas City Scout traffic management system has become an integral component of the region's transportation network and a valued resource for metropolitan area motorists.

The Kansas and Missouri departments of Transportation acknowledged the one-year milestone at a Sept. 27 press conference inside Scout's Traffic Operations Center in Lee's Summit.



State Rep. Gary Dusenberg (center) visits with Don Hillis (left) and Ray Webb at the Sept. 27 anniversary event.

Scout system operators monitor freeway conditions with closed-circuit television cameras and traffic detectors. Those devices help operators determine traffic flow and the location of incidents such as an accident. Operators also post messages on Scout's electronic freeway signs to notify travelers about traffic conditions ahead of them and send updated traveler information to the Scout Web site.

The Scout system began limited operations in January 2004 with 75 miles of coverage on portions of Interstates 70, 435, 35 and a handful of other Kansas and Missouri freeways. Since then, Scout has expanded services -- including its recent transition to operating seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and during holidays.

MoDOT System Management Director Don Hillis acknowledged the anxiety that accompanied the startup during his remarks at the anniversary event.

"We also knew Scout had the potential for success, and it's appropriate that we celebrate this milestone," Hillis said. "Reducing traffic jams and enhancing response times to incidents makes

Scout an important part of MoDOT's commitment to safety."

Since its official launch, Scout has activated its network of message boards more than 4,000 times and broadcast more than 7,700 messages. Those messages range from information about roadwork and accidents to AMBER Alert notifications.

"Those numbers can do nothing but go up with a 24/7 operation," Hillis added.

KDOT Planning and Development Director Terry Heidner acknowledged the planning, transportation and emergency service partners who help the Scout system thrive. He said investing in Scout should pay long-term dividends.

"We can't always build our way out of congestion, but we can improve traffic flow on our existing facilities through systems like Scout," Heidner said.

With expansion of Scout's coverage area already under way, Traffic Operations Center Manager Ray Webb said that the system had "initiated new dialogue for traffic management in the metropolitan area."

And Scout has caught the attention of its peers. In recent months, the system has received a Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity and was cited at the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop.

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Signing Ceremonies Celebrate Designated Routes



MoDOT Maintenance Superintendent Ron Faulkenberry unveils the Veterans Memorial Parkway sign in Holden Sept. 22 as Jesse Padgett from the Holden VFW and Holden High School Band members watch.



Staff Assistant to U.S. Rep. Ike Skelton Joy Seitz (left) and Rep. Joe Aull (right) unveil the Congressman Ike Skelton Bridge sign on the new Route 13 Missouri River bridge in Lafayette County Sept. 19. A ceremony was held simultaneously at the north end of the bridge in Ray County. Participants included (l-r): Lexington Police Chief Don Rector, Lafayette County Commissioner Gil Rector, Wellington-area veteran Don Lindley, Lexington Mayor Tom Hayes, Lafayette County Presiding Commissioner Jim Strodtman, Seitz, Lafayette County Clerk Linda Niendick, Lexington Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ann Crume, and Aull.

Destination: SAFE Campaigns to Save Lives

Many voices working together can get across a message loud enough to save lives.

That's the aim of Destination: SAFE, a coalition of MoDOT and other Kansas City regional agencies on both sides of the state line focused on reducing transportation fatalities.

Destination: SAFE employed a new tool earlier this month to demonstrate impaired driving dangers to students at South Valley Junior High School in Liberty, Mo. Taking a turn behind the wheel of the battery-powered go-kart-like simulator nicknamed SIDNE, (Simulated Impaired Driving Experience), students experienced consequences of impaired driving. When switched to impaired mode, the vehicle's handling simulates effects of alcohol or drug impairment on the driving skills of a motorist.

Last year 217 people died and more than 14,000 people were injured in crashes across the Kansas City metropolitan area. Destination: SAFE, in cooperation with the Missouri "Arrive Alive" and Kansas "Safe Not Sorry" safety campaigns, is developing a safety blueprint for the Kansas City region to reduce serious injuries and fatalities on area roadways. Local partners include law enforcement officers, traffic engineers, transportation planners, emergency responders, public health officials, educators and safety advocates in Kansas and Missouri.

Destination: SAFE has received \$223,385 from the Missouri Department of Transportation to address occupant protection, impaired driving, aggressive driving and pedestrian safety.

D5

Central

Employees Honored for Long-Time Safety

It's been four decades of working safely for Local Maintenance Supervisor Elmer Greunke and Intermediate Materials Inspector Steve Cox. The two men have each spent 40 years in a safety-sensitive job without a lost-time accident. They were honored for this important accomplishment at a ceremony on Oct. 11.

Greunke said he really hadn't thought about having 40 years of safe service until Safety and Health Manager Chris Engelbrecht called him a few weeks ago to deliver the news. He admits it's a little overwhelming to think about it.

Working in an atmosphere with increasing traffic volumes and noise is the

daily routine. But Greunke said it is important not to let your guard down.

"Be aware of your surroundings whether you are working with hand tools or in traffic," said Greunke. "Look out for one another."

Employees honored for having 25 years of safe service were Drake Senior Crew Worker Ron Lottmann, Senior Construction Technician Bobbie Ahart and Resident Engineer Mike O'Malley.

"I am proud of these employees," said Engelbrecht. "Working safely should be the top priority for all employees and these individuals have done so for 25 or more years. That's a pretty big deal."



Intermediate Materials Inspector Steve Cox, Senior Construction Technician Bobbie Ahart, Resident Engineer Mike O'Malley, Local Maintenance Supervisor Elmer Greunke and Senior Crew Worker Ron Lottmann have not had lost-time accidents in a quarter century or more.

Lighting the Way

10



Lighting work takes place on Route 54 in Jefferson City.

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Motorists Traveling Smoother, Safer Mid-Missouri Highways

It has been a very busy summer for Missouri highway crews. Even as outdoor temperatures cool, MoDOT remains busy around-the-clock making steady progress on the plan to make roads Smoother, Safer, Sooner. At the end of September, nearly 415,000 tons of asphalt had been placed on major mid-Missouri highways.

"We have had good weather for construction and were able to make significant progress on these projects," said Operations Engineer Mike Anderson. "Our employees have been working very hard to ensure the successful completion of the Smooth Roads Initiative in our district."

As of the middle of September, the district had finished more than 81 percent of the active SRI projects scheduled for completion in 2005.

The completion of resurfacing on Route 54 in Camden County earlier this spring marked the first SRI job to be completed in District 5. Several jobs are currently in progress, including resurfacing Route 63 from Interstate 70 in Boone County to Route 54 in Callaway County. Much of that work is nearing completion.

The district concrete crew has been busy all summer trying to stay ahead of resurfacing work. They've completed approximately 3,140 patches on SRI routes since last November. And, maintenance has stayed on top of shoulder and edge rut repairs.

But, there is no time to slow down. Crews continue to push forward in preparation for diamond grinding projects in Boone, Callaway and Cole counties to smooth and even pavements.



The lanes of Route 63 between Route 54 and Ashland are newly resurfaced. As part of MoDOT's improved striping program, the project includes new edgeline rumblestrips and a wider centerline stripe.

Residents Learn About Bridge Replacement Plans

About 30 people attended a public hearing on Oct. 4 to learn how they might be affected by plans to replace the Miller Creek Bridge on Route F in Callaway County. The bridge is located approximately eight miles west of Route 54. Commuters use Route F to travel between Fulton and Columbia.

The project will require the roadway to be closed at the bridge location for approximately three months. Most people were pleased with plans to replace the current one-lane bridge built in 1953.

The new bridge will be wider and include shoulders. Suggestions from the public included ways to minimize traffic impacts.



Project Manager Kenny Voss talks one-on-one with a Callaway County resident about plans to replace the Miller Creek Bridge on Route F.

D6

St. Louis Area

District 6 Improves Safety on Route MM

by Megan McEntee

District 6 is improving safety along a one-mile section of Route MM at Sycamore Springs Road in Jefferson County. The project started in August and is expected to be complete in July 2006.

“The section of Route MM at Sycamore Springs Road was identified as having the greatest need for improvements along the Route MM corridor,” said Area Engineer Tom Blair. Blair said that this location also had the highest crash rate and highest fatal crash rate along the corridor. The crash rate is three times the state average for two-lane roads.

Route MM from approximately one-half mile east and west of Sycamore Springs Road is a very hilly, narrow and winding roadway with no shoulders and very limited sight distance. MoDOT will flatten the curves and lower the crests on Route MM, add 6-foot shoulders, install guardrail where needed, and add left-turn lanes at Miller Road and Sycamore Springs Road. The project cost is \$6 million.

There is a new alignment planned for Route MM, but it is not funded.



Megan McEntee

Fred Weber Inc. crews are drilling holes for the dynamite charges, which are being used to blast the rock underneath the dirt. There are two giant hills in this project on Route MM: one on the east side of Sycamore Springs, and one on the west side of Sycamore Springs. The hills are being lowered an average of 100 feet. One-half million cubic yards of rock, dirt and earth are being removed for this project.

“The improvements on the existing Route MM will make it safer and will help save lives today,” said Blair.

To see an aerial photo of the Route MM improvement project or to

get more information about the future of the newly aligned Route MM, go to MoDOT’s Web site at www.modot.org/stlouis/major_projects/jefferson-countyupdates.htm.

Construction Crews Build Two-Lane Bridges on Route T in Franklin County



Megan McEntee

Employees at Goodwin Brothers Construction Inc. are doing grading work for the new two-lane box culvert bridge on Route T at Tavern Creek, just west of Route 100. To the left is the existing one-lane bridge. The poles on the right show the centerline on the new alignment of the roadway over the new bridge. By moving the roadway north of the existing bridge the curve in the roadway will be eliminated, and the elevation of the road will be raised 5 to 8 feet. This project is scheduled to be completed in June 2006.



Megan McEntee

Goodwin Brothers Construction Inc. is also working on building a new two-lane bridge on Route T at Fiddle Creek, which is four miles east of Route MM. The bridge elevation is 18 feet higher than the old bridge to prevent the road and bridge from flooding. The road is being moved south of the old bridge. This project is scheduled to be completed in June 2006.

District 6 Opens New Ramp in St. Charles County

Local, state and federal officials helped celebrate the opening of the new westbound Interstate 70 ramp to eastbound Route 40/61. (L-R): Jenni Riegel, southern regional director from the office of U.S. Congressman Kenny Hulshof; Kacky Garner, district director from the office of U.S. Senator Jim Talent; City of Wentzville Mayor Paul Lambi; MoDOT Intermediate Design Technician Randal Masnica; MoDOT Resident Engineer Niall Jansson; MoDOT Area Engineer Jim Gremaud; hiding behind Jim is MoDOT Intermediate Construction Inspector Cindy Martin; Project Engineer Clem Kivindyo of Millstone Bangert; MoDOT District Engineer Ed Hassinger; and Project Manager Robert Hofer of Millstone Bangert. The \$11.5 million project relocated the existing southbound Route 61 ramp to westbound Interstate 70, removed the existing westbound Interstate 70 ramp to Route 61 and added a new westbound Interstate 70 ramp to eastbound Route 40.

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Thomas Miller

D7

Southwest

Trying Something Old in Barry County

by Kent Boyd

Departments of Transportation like new and snazzy things. The newest technology or construction technique tends to get the blood flowing. So why is District 7 trying out a road design that isn't used much any more in Missouri? "Safety," said District Engineer Richard Walter. "And we're trying to think outside the box."

Outside the box means alternating passing lanes for Route 37 in Barry County. It's an 18-mile stretch of the road, between Monett and Cassville, that's seen 10 fatal crashes in the past two-and-a half years. Seven of them were head-on. Construction on the passing lanes began earlier this year and should be finished by November.

The passing lanes are a variation on climbing lanes. Motorists occasionally see climbing lanes on two-lane highways, especially in the Ozarks. They're sections of road that have three lanes on steep hills. Traffic going up uses two lanes and traffic going down uses one lane. This arrangement gives uphill traffic a chance to pass slow-moving traffic. Over the years, many highways that had climbing lanes were improved to four lanes. Climbing lanes are now scarce.

"There's a basic difference between the old climbing lanes and our new passing lanes," said Walter. "The passing lanes

are not necessarily on hills. We're even putting them on flat, straight stretches."

The inspiration for the passing lanes came from several places. It started out as a simple reconstruction project of 40-year old pavement. Project Manager Scott McKee said he wasn't even thinking about passing lanes when design started.

"Juggling the high volume of traffic during construction was steering us toward building 12-foot lanes with 12-foot, full-depth shoulders." The beefed up shoulders were needed to handle traffic while the driving lanes were torn out and rebuilt. As design moved forward, two things happened: MoDOT adopted the Blueprint for Safety and District 7 designers came across a MoDOT study of the benefits and criteria for passing lanes. At this point, things started to click. Several people realized that the new 48-foot wide pavement could accommodate passing lanes. "And we asked ourselves, what could we do to make 37 safer right now?" said McKee. "Passing lanes were the obvious answer."

"This has a lot to do with driver psychology," said Walter. "Think about what happens when a bunch of cars get stuck behind someone who's going 45 mph, and the speed limit is 60 mph. Drivers get frustrated and they

try to pass, even when it's not safe. So a passing lane is sort of like a relief

valve that gives drivers a chance to pass safely."



Soon this stretch of Route 37 will be a passing section with three lanes and different lines marking the lanes.

Life After MoDOT...D7 Retirees' Corner

God, Family and Two Jobs for Phil Erwin

12 by Lita Cambers

After putting in 35 years at MoDOT, Right of Way employee Phil Erwin decided it was time to retire. So in 2003, he ended his MoDOT service and began his current stint with Tri-State Engineering as a right of way agent and certified real estate appraiser. At Tri-State he obtains water line and gas line easements and acquires right of way for the City of Joplin.

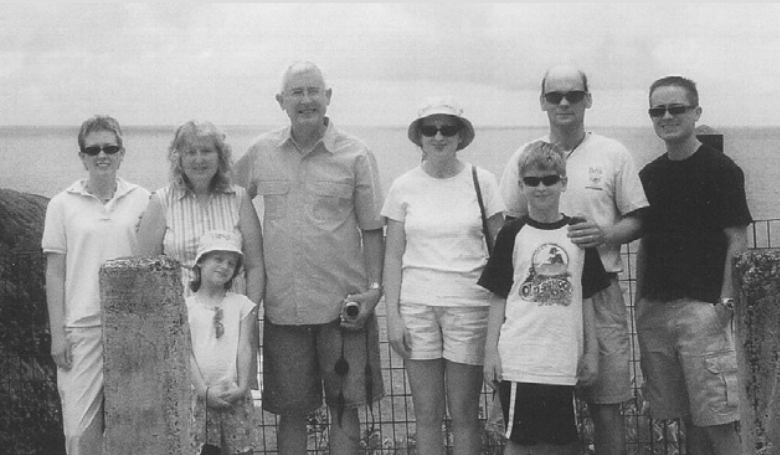
But Phil considers his job as pastor of the First Gospel Workers Church in Joplin his primary job. His wife Nancy

is the co-pastor. Nancy is also an artist who enjoys painting old Joplin-area buildings. Her artwork is currently on display at the Joplin Post Memorial Art Library.

Phil and Nancy have three children and two grandchildren, whom they took to the island of Kauai on vacation with them in June. Phil and Nancy also just returned from a small vacation on Lake Michigan.

Phil likes to joke that he's all about expansion. By the age of 60, he retired

from one job, is working two jobs, and has seen his family expand from two people to eight.



Pictured along the Napali Coast of Kauai from left to right are Shari and Nancy Erwin, Kaitlyn Williams (front), Phil Erwin, Tamie, Alex and Todd Williams, and Daniel Erwin.

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D8

Springfield Area



Bob Edwards

Route 160 between Kisse Mills and Rueter is designated the Rick Harmon Memorial Highway under legislation sponsored by state Rep. Maynard Wallace. MoDOT employees and Rueter community members paid for the signs, unveiled in an October ceremony. Rick Harmon, then-Rueter maintenance supervisor, died in an August 2004 motorgrader accident. Cleaning one of the signs is Branson Intermediate Crew Worker Shawn Nilges after he and Rueter Senior Crew Worker Craig Trotter installed them.

Snow Removal: Dollars & 'Sense'

by Angela Eden

Clearing snow this winter without breaking the budget will challenge District 8 as fuel and salt costs rise.

"We're trying to be more efficient with our snow removal," said Roving Maintenance Superintendent Armin Herman. The district is looking at ways to conserve fuel while plowing and spreading salt to keep the roads as safe as possible during winter storms, he said.

Winter preparations include refresher training for plow operators, topping off salt bins and readying 25 new dump trucks with spreaders and plows to replace aging equipment at various shops.

By the numbers:

- Diesel fuel cost: \$2.50 a gallon (est.), up from \$1.80 a gallon last winter.
- Salt cost: \$43 a ton, up from \$37 a ton last winter.
- Salt storage capacity: 27,100 tons.
- Snowplow-equipped trucks: 181.
- Computerized GL400 salt/abrasives spreaders: 128
- Field mechanics trained as master GL400 operators: 21.

Route 65/Hollister: Winter Push

by Bob Edwards

Winter construction activities on the Route 65 interchange project at Hollister will involve extensive grading work and curb, drain pipe and signal installation, especially where the future Business 65 is being built.

Every winter day that weather permits, something will be going on as contractors push toward completion in late 2006, said Branson Senior Construction Inspector Brett Foster. "In early spring, you're going to see asphalt work really kick off," Foster said.

In a separate project just north of Hollister, where Route 65 is being four-

laned, columns for the new bridge over Lake Taneycomo should begin coming out of the ground in November, he said.

The project between Branson and Hollister, with a scheduled spring 2007 completion, also will see numerous brief traffic stops for blasting through the winter months, Foster said.

The four-laning of Route 65 south of Hollister to the Missouri-Arkansas line, a third project, will begin in 2006.

"Talkin' Transportation"
Call-In Radio Show
KWTO 560 AM, Springfield
10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays
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Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Photos from top to bottom:

Repairing a bridge approach on Route 465 near Branson are, from left, Branson Senior Crew Worker Robin Ingles, Rueter Maintenance Supervisor Charlie Peterson and Branson Senior Crew Worker Barney Barnard along with Branson Crew Worker Brett Johnson, in back, operating the roller.

Senior Crew Worker Randy Workman, foreground, and Intermediate Crew Worker David Henry, both of the Wheatland shop, are part of a mowing crew on Route 54 west of Hermitage.

Sticking temporary center-line markers on Route 5 near Hartville are Intermediate Crew Worker Glendon Burris, left, and Senior Crew Worker Bill Freeman, both of the Manes shop. Permanent striping was painted later on the chip-sealed roadway.

Retiree Jay Parrott, left, jokes with the cooks, Maintenance Superintendents Earl Wallace, middle, and Steve Dunn, during a retirees picnic at Doling Park in Springfield. The mid-October gathering drew 35 retirees and spouses. District Engineer Dale Ricks and Support Services Manager Greg Donoho provided updates on medical insurance and other issues.

D9

South Central

Rahn Visits Belleview Area

by Ann Marie Newberry

District 9 welcomed MoDOT State Director Pete Rahn on Oct. 6. Rahn visited the Belleview Maintenance Building where he began the day by meeting with employees from maintenance sheds in Belleview, Steelville, Cherryville (formerly Czar Tower), Centerville and Annapolis.

Rahn covered topics including:

- improved public and media perception regarding MoDOT;
- delivering on the promises of Smoother, Safer, Sooner;

- Gov. Matt Blunt’s recommendation that all state agencies develop measurement tools similar to MoDOT’s Tracker;
- continued talks with Gov. Blunt regarding MoDOT salary increases despite a statewide freeze;
- a scheduled 2006 job study for crew workers which could result in market-based salary adjustments; and
- positives of the proposed consolidation of MoDOT and Missouri State Employee retirement programs.



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn

Ann Marie Newberry

Following the employee meeting, Rahn attended a luncheon with elected officials to discuss MoDOT’s plans for Routes V and W in Iron County and other topics of interest. Before departing for the day, he toured the eastern portion of the district, where he surveyed maintenance work and visited points of interest.

Section of Route 60 Completed Eighteen Miles in Carter County

by Ann Marie Newberry

A dedication for the Route 60 project was held Oct. 4 at the R Bar H Arena and Expo near Ellsinore. The work was a joint effort between the Southeast and South Central Districts of MoDOT. South Central District Engineer Tom Stehn led the event, welcoming officials and providing details regarding the lane additions.

Among elected officials attending was 8th District Representative Jo Ann Emerson, who along with U. S. Senators Christopher “Kit” Bond and Jim Talent,

has been instrumental in gaining support for the project. Emerson noted the impact on economic development the four-lane project will have.

She mentioned how improved roadways help create job opportunities which encourage young people who leave the area in search of higher education to return upon graduation. Following her comments, she was invited to assist with placing the “Completed As Promised” banner across a point of presence sign from the project.



District Engineer Tom Stehn and Representative Jo Ann Emerson place the Completed as Promised banner on the lane addition sign for Route 60 during the dedication ceremony held Oct. 4.

Debra Smith

MoDOT Crews Make Route 160 Safer

D9 and D10 Build Shoulders

by Ann Marie Newberry

14 A dedication for shoulder work performed on Route 160 in Ripley and Butler counties was held Oct. 12 at the Doniphan Maintenance Building. Local and state elected officials were on hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

According to Operations Engineer Henry Haggard, the project was a joint effort between Districts 9 and 10 and included work from Pace Construction of Poplar Bluff. “Fourteen MoDOT maintenance crews from Richwoods,

Potosi, Czar Tower, Belleview, Annapolis, Centerville, Ellington, Eminence, Winona, Van Buren, Ellsinore and Doniphan in District 9 and from Poplar Bluff and Naylor in District 10 worked on this project,” he said. “It went ex-

tremely well. The public was cooperative during the process and appreciative of the finished project. The result is a safer roadway thanks to the installation of asphalt shoulders.”



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Ann Marie Newberry

D10

Southeast

Child Safety Technicians Receive Certification

by Angie Wilson

Southeast Missouri children now have 17 more child passenger safety experts to help keep them safe when traveling thanks to a technician course held Oct. 11-14 at the district office.

Class Instructor Lynn Ware said, “The standardized child passenger safety technician certification course combines classroom instruction, hands-on work with car seats and vehicles and a safety seat check-up. We had a great group of 13 very excited and interested professionals from MoDOT in the recent class.”

With the certification, the technicians can now participate in safety seat checks to determine if the car seat is in proper working condition and installed properly.

“Properly installed safety seats reduce the risk of death for young children by 50 to 70 percent,” Ware said.

Training participants learned a great deal about the ins and outs of car seats going as far as taking the seats apart and putting them back together.

Senior Traffic Specialist Kelly Green said, “By participating in the training I learned that there’s a lot more to this than I initially thought. With so many different types of vehicles and seats, you must work with them for compatibility. It’s important that we work to educate people since 80 percent of people misuse car seats,”

The course was conducted as part of the Southeast Coalition For Roadway Safety efforts. The Southeast Coalition is comprised of law enforcement, medical, planning and engineering professionals from throughout MoDOT’s 14-county Southeast District. The coalition is implementing strategies for reducing serious injuries and deaths associated with traffic crashes on Missouri roadways.

District representatives on the coalition include Traffic Operations Engineer Craig Compas, Traffic Engineering Specialist Melissa Rose, Planning Project Manager Bill Robinson, Assistant to the District Engineer Cheryl Ball and Community Relations Manager Angie Wilson.



Design Technician Scott Melton installs a car seat as part of the child passenger safety technician certification class held recently at the district office.

Ware said, “With one of the coalition’s essential eight strategies being to increase public education and information on traffic safety issues and with car crashes being the number one threat to children, offering the certification training was a natural fit.”

The coalition is working to have enough new car seats available so that when one doesn’t pass the test at a safety seat check, a new seat can be provided to the family before they ever leave the check point location.

Smoother Route 67



MoDOT representatives from Districts 10 and 6, legislative and local officials and the public recently celebrated the start of a smoother Route 67 in Jefferson and St. Francois counties. A kick-off event was held on Sept. 27 in Bonne Terre. The 35-mile project runs from I-55 in Jefferson County to Route W in St. Francois County.

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Farewell to Retirees

More than 90 years of service to southeast Missourians will be missed as three Southeast District employees retired Oct. 1.

Rick Proffer began his career in 1979 as a crew worker with the Marquand Maintenance crew and 25 years later retired from Marquand as a senior crew worker.

“I’ll be doing some mission work, volunteering at the food pantry at church and enjoying some fishing,” Proffer said.

Steve Torbet began working for the department in 1973. At that time he was a highway design technician. Torbet spent the majority of his 32 years in the design division, retiring as a senior highway designer.

“I’m going to begin by taking a good nap, along with some camping, hunting, fishing and visiting with friends and relatives. I’m going to do a little work and enjoy retirement,” Torbet said

In 1969 Dale Graham began his career as a construction assistant, moving to the materials division in 1977. He retired as a senior materials inspector after 36 years with MoDOT.



Area Engineer Dale Kinneman, left, congratulates Senior Crew Worker Rick Proffer on his 25 years of service.



Senior Highway Designer Scott Perry, right, congratulates Senior Highway Designer Steve Torbet on his 32 years of service.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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MoDOT Employees Pitch In To Help Hurricane Victims

by Jeff Briggs

Officially, MoDOT didn't assist with Hurricane Katrina relief. No agency assistance was requested, although we offered. But that doesn't mean there weren't plenty of MoDOT workers ready and willing to help.

"We didn't want to just go down there on our own and be in the way," said Director of System Management Don Hillis. "But when we asked if anyone would be willing to help if we did get the call, we got more than 800 volunteers. That shows you the class of people we work with."

Plenty of our co-workers did help in one way or another, though. Here are just a few examples.

In District 6, employees teamed up with department contractors and consultants to hold a benefit golf tournament that raised more than \$6,200. The district also donated thousands of state maps to help relief crews relocate victims in the St. Louis area. On top of that, the district donated old Motorist Assist uniforms to provide relief workers with fresh clothes.

District 4 teamed up with the Highway Patrol and Department of Natural Resources to collect donations from employees and the public and is planning additional fundraisers.

District 3 raised nearly \$600 in employee donations, and District 8 employees adopted a family that was evacuated from New Orleans and now is making a permanent home in the Ozarks. The district's Employees Committee put on a benefit luncheon and raised \$750 to help the family pay utility bills for their Republic apartment. Employees also donated furniture, food, clothing and other items to the family.

Four Branson-area MoDOT workers made an overnight trip to the airport in



Danny and Ashley Bassett show off the truckload of food collected by Dixon Middle School students.

St. Louis on Labor Day weekend to haul much-needed medical supplies bound for Louisiana.

Father, Daughter Effort Proves Successful

Danny Bassett, intermediate crew worker at the Dixon Maintenance Building, partnered with his 12-year-old daughter, Ashley, to challenge the students at Dixon Middle School to donate food and personal items for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

On Friday of the weeklong drive, Bassett said he arrived at the school around 3:30 p.m. to pick up Ashley and the donations and found a surprise.

"The secretary told me she hoped I had brought a truck," he said. "I walked into the teachers' lounge where there were boxes lined up all along the wall and things on the floor in front of them."

MoDOT Employees Staff Missouri Task Force #1

Two District 5 employees were ready to help with the aftermath even before

the storm hit. Certified Right of Way Specialist John Sweet and Rocheport Senior Crew Worker Kent Cunningham are members of Missouri Task Force #1 based in Boone County.

Sweet headed south on Aug. 27 for approximately two weeks. Following Katrina's Aug. 29 landfall, the task force made its way to New Orleans.



Kent Cunningham, left, and John Sweet are members of Missouri Task Force #1.

Their goal was to search out and rescue as many people as possible that were in life-threatening situations.

Operating from a partially submerged highway, the task force used boats to

travel from house to house searching for people.

"There were areas where water was up to the eaves of one-story houses. We could step to the rooftops from our boats," said Sweet.

Sweet said immediately upon beginning the search, he located an elderly man who needed to be rescued from his attic. Dehydrated and in need of medical attention, the task force helped the man reach safety.

"People were grateful, thankful that we were there to help them," said Sweet.

"I don't think any of us realized the magnitude of the devastation until we flew in the (helicopters). We knew there was flooding, but we didn't know the majority of the city was flooded."

Cunningham left Columbia on Sept. 13 and was part of the second wave of rescue help sent by Missouri Task Force #1. Progress made as a result of Katrina was temporarily set back by the arrival of Hurricane Rita, which hit Texas and Louisiana.

Both men say outside temperatures during the rescue efforts reached into the low 100s. Cunningham said indoor temperatures of the buildings searched were often too hot to register on portable temperature gauges. Both men talked of the stench from contaminated floodwaters.

"What you see on TV is not even a fourth of it," said Cunningham. "It looked like a war zone. You just can't fathom."

"I felt fortunate to be able to help and be able to use the training I spent years learning," said Sweet.

The task force is made up of men and women from all different professions.

"People don't realize what they have with Missouri Task Force #1," said Cunningham. "They are dedicated people who gave it their all. I'm so proud of them."